

REMARKS

Responsive to the office action mailed September 27, 2007, Applicants provide the following. Claims 6 and 7 have been amended to be in independent form. Claims 1-5 and 8-49 have been canceled. Therefore, two (2) claims remain pending in the application: Claims 6 and 7. Reconsideration of claims 6 and 7 in view of the amendments above and remarks below is respectfully requested.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 6-7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have amended claims 6 and 7 to be in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By way of this response, Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain any outstanding issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Thomas F. Lebens, Attorney for Applicants at (805) 541-2800 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

1. Claims 1-5, 8-16 and 45-49 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,639,733 (Minano et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as the Minano patent fails to expressly or inherently describe each and every element as set forth in claims 1-5, 8-16 and 45-49. Claims 1-5, 8-16 and 45-49, however, have been canceled rendering the rejection moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 6 and 7 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and were indicated as "allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims" (office action, pg. 10). Applicants have amended both claims 6 and 7 to be in independent form. Specifically,

claim 6 has been amended incorporating base independent claim 1 along with intervening claims 4 and 5. Similarly, claim 7 has been amended incorporating base independent claim 1. As such, claims 6 and 7 are in independent form and both have incorporated all of the limitations of the base independent claim 1 and all intervening claims where appropriate. Therefore, claims 6 and 7 are in condition for allowance.

The amendments presented herein are for the purpose of pursuing the timely issuance of the allowable subject matter. Thus, the amendment of claims 6 and 7, as well as the cancellation of claims 1-5, 8-16 and 45-49, should not represent a surrender of any subject matter and Applicants specifically preserve the right to present these claims in their originally filed form in a continuing application.

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that the above amendments and remarks place the pending claims 6 and 7 in a condition for allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,
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